



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/673,063	01/04/2001	Gebhard Michenfelder	10191/1583	9602

26646 7590 10/17/2003

KENYON & KENYON  
ONE BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, NY 10004

EXAMINER
----------

STAFIRA, MICHAEL PATRICK

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2877

DATE MAILED: 10/17/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/673,063

Applicant(s)

MICHENFELDER ET AL.

Examiner

Michael P. Stafira

Art Unit

2877

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on RCE filed 6/27/2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 20-66 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 44-65 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 20-43 and 66 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 19.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Priority*

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

### *Claim Objections*

2. Claims 20-66 are objected to because of the following informalities: In claims 20 and 44 it has been held that the recitation that an element is "adapted to" perform a function is not a positive limitation but only requires the ability to so perform. It does not constitute a limitation in any patentable sense. *In re Huchison*, 69USPQ 138. Appropriate correction is required.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371© of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

2. Claims 44-48,51-53,61,64,65 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Teder ('303).

#### **Claim 44**

Teder ('303) discloses a housing (Fig. 3, Ref. 28) including a light conducting element (Fig. 2, Ref. 24) joined to the housing (Col. 6, lines 24-28); and a plurality of optical and electronic components mounted in the housing including at least one transmitter (Fig. 3, Ref. 56)

Art Unit: 2877

for transmitting an electromagnetic wave and at least one receiver (Fig. 3, Ref. 58) for receiving the electromagnetic wave, the measuring distance influencing a wave propagation between the at least one transmitter and the at least one receiver such that when a coating forms on the windshield, an output signal sensed by the at least one receiver is changed (Col. 7, lines 38-42; Col. 9, lines 12-19).

**Claim 45**

The reference of Teder ('303) further discloses that the rain sensor is used in a motor vehicle (Col. 6, lines 31-34).

**Claim 46**

Teder ('303) further discloses the coating is a result of wetting by precipitation (Col. 9, lines 12-19).

**Claim 47**

The reference of Teder ('303) further discloses the light conducting element (Fig. 2, Ref. 24) forms a base plate (Fig. 2, Ref. 42) of the housing (Fig. 3, Ref. 28) and includes a broad area of connection with the windshield (Fig. 3, Ref. 18) (Col. 6, lines 34-41, 52-57).

**Claim 48**

Teder ('303) further discloses a common printed board (Fig. 3, Ref. 26) on which is mounted the plurality of optical (Fig. 3, Ref. 56, 58) and electronic (Fig. 3, Ref. 80A, 80B, 80C) components in accordance with SMD technology (Col. 7, lines 34-38).

**Claim 51**

The reference of Teder ('303) further discloses that the rain sensor is cemented (Col. 6, lines 40-41) to an inside of the windshield (Col. 6, lines 29-45).

**Claim 52**

Art Unit: 2877

Teder ('303) further discloses a transparent film (Fig. 2, Ref. 36) that is self-adhesive on each side thereof and corresponds to a connection between the windshield and the light conducting element (Col. 6, lines 40-45).

**Claim 53**

The reference of Teder ('303) further discloses that the output signal is provided to a downstream analysis circuit (Fig. 3, Ref. 80A, 80B, 80C, 80D) and includes information with respect to an instantaneous degree of wetting of the windshield (Col. 8, lines 35-51; Col. 9, lines 12-18) and the housing is a rectangular-shaped sensor housing (See Fig. 3).

**Claim 61**

Teder ('303) further discloses that the light conducting element includes optical areas formed from transparent plastic for at least one receiver (Col. 6, lines 46-54).

**Claim 64**

The reference of Teder ('303) further discloses the light conducting element (Fig. 2, Ref. 24) includes integrated lens structures (Fig. 2, Ref. 38, 40) for light bundling (Col. 6, lines 52-64).

**Claim 65**

The reference of Teder ('303) further discloses the light conducting element (Fig. 2, Ref. 24) forms a cover of the housing (See Fig. 3).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 2877

4. Claims 49, 50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teder ('303) as applied to claim 48 above, and further in view of Zettler et al. ('245).

**Claim 49**

Teder ('303) substantially teaches the claimed invention except that it does not show an integrated connector for an electrical connection to a downstream analysis unit. Zettler et al. ('245) shows that it is known to provide an integrated connector (Fig. 3, Ref. 46) for an electrical connection to a downstream analysis unit (Col. 3, lines 5-13) for a remote connection sensor. It would have been obvious to combine the device of Teder ('303) with the integrated connector of Zettler et al. ('245) for the purpose of providing signals to turn-on a wiper assembly when moisture is detected on the windshield. It is obvious to one skilled in the art to know that the motor assembly of Zettler et al. ('245) would have some sort of analysis unit to determine when to turn-on or turn-off the motor assembly, therefore the reference of Zettler et al. ('245) reads on applicants claim.

The reference of Teder ('303) further discloses that the housing (Fig. 3, Ref. 28) corresponds to a rectangular-shaped sensor housing (See Figure 3).

**Claim 50**

Teder ('303) substantially teaches the claimed invention except that it does not show contact pins through which the printed circuit board is connected to the integrated connector. Zettler et al. ('245) shows that it is known to provide contact pins (See Fig. 3) through which the printed circuit board (Fig. 3, Ref. 42) is connected to the integrated connector (Fig. 3, Ref. 46) (See Fig. 3) for an external connection to a sensor. It would have been obvious to combine the device of Teder ('303) with the contact pins of Zettler et al. ('245) for the purpose of providing signals to turn-on a wiper assembly when moisture is detected on the windshield.

Art Unit: 2877

5. Claim 54 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teder ('303) as applied to claim 53 above, and further in view of Reime ('531).

**Claim 54**

Teder ('303) substantially teaches the claimed invention except that it does not show at least one of a windshield wiper mechanism and a vehicle lighting system is activated as a function of the output signal. Reime ('531) shows that it is known to provide a windshield wiper mechanism and a vehicle lighting system is activated as a function of the output signal (Col. 3-4, lines 25-14) for an integrated optical sensor system. It would have been obvious to combine the device of Teder ('303) with the windshield wiper mechanism and a vehicle lighting system of Reime ('531) for the purpose of providing compact construction when two different conditions are being measured.

6. Claims 55, 56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teder ('303) as applied to claim 44 above, and further in view of Watanabe et al. ('613).

**Claim 55**

Teder ('303) substantially teaches the claimed invention except that it does not show the one transmitter includes at least one LED. Watanabe et al. ('613) shows that it is known to provide at least one transmitter that includes at least one LED (Fig. 1, Ref. 24; Col. 3, lines 67-68) for an optical rain sensor. It would have been obvious to combine the device of Teder ('303) with the LED of Watanabe et al. ('613) for the purpose of providing a long lasting reliable light emitting source when used in a harsh environment.

**Claim 56**

Teder ('303) substantially teaches the claimed invention except that it does not show a first one of the at least one receiver that detects an optical signal emitted by the at least one LED

Art Unit: 2877

includes a photodiode. Watanabe et al. ('613) shows that it is known to provide a receiver that detects an optical signal emitted by the LED includes a photodiode (Fig. 1, Ref. 25; Col. 4, lines 3-7) for an optical rain sensor. It would have been obvious to combine the device of Teder ('303) with the LED and photodiode of Watanabe et al. ('613) for the purpose of providing a long lasting reliable light receiving element when used in harsh environments.

7. Claim 57 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teder ('303) as applied to claim 44 above, and further in view of O'Farrell et al ('917).

**Claim 57**

Teder ('303) in combination with O'Farrell et al. ('917) discloses the claimed invention except for the at least one ambient light sensor includes an aperture angle of approximately 40 degrees inclined upward with an aperture direction in a direction of travel. It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to angle the aperture at 40 degrees, since applicant has not disclosed that having the aperture at 40 degrees solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose and it appears that the invention would perform equally well with the 25 degree aperture (Col. 7, lines 3-6) disclosed in O'Farrell et al. ('917).

8. Claims 58, 59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teder ('303) in combination with O'Farrell et al. ('917) as applied to claim 44 above, and further in view of Hasch et al. ('669).

**Claim 58**

Teder ('303) in combination with O'Farrell et al. ('917) substantially teaches the claimed invention except that it does not show the at least one ambient light sensor is sensitive to ultraviolet light. Hasch et al. ('669) shows that it is known to provide at least one ambient light



sensor that is sensitive to ultraviolet light (See Abstract; Col. 4, lines 40-56) for a vehicle moisture sensor. It would have been obvious to combine the device of Teder ('303) in combination with O'Farrell et al. ('917) with the sensitivity to ultraviolet light of Hasch et al. ('669) for the purpose of providing a sensor system that reacts to subsequent changes in the ambient conditions. It is obvious to one skilled in the art to know that the reference of Hasch et al. ('669) is sensitive to ultraviolet light because the optical sensor of Hasch et al. ('669) measures ambient light for a vehicle and therefore would naturally measure sunlight which contains ultraviolet light.

**Claim 59**

Teder ('303) in combination with O'Farrell et al. ('917) substantially teaches the claimed invention except that it does not show the ultraviolet light corresponds to sunlight. Hasch et al. ('669) shows that it is known that ultraviolet light corresponds to sunlight (See Abstract; Col. 4, lines 40-56) for a vehicle moisture sensor. It would have been obvious to combine the device of Teder ('303) in combination with O'Farrell et al. ('917) with the ultraviolet light of Hasch et al. ('669) for the purpose of providing a sensor system that reacts to subsequent changes in the ambient conditions. It is obvious to one skilled in the art to know that the reference of Hasch et al. ('669) measures ambient light from a vehicle optical sensor, therefore it would naturally measure ultraviolet light which corresponds to sunlight.

9. Claims 60,62,63 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Teder ('303) as applied to claim 44 above, and further in view of Zettler et al. ('245).

**Claim 60**

Teder ('303) substantially teaches the claimed invention except that it does not show when infrared light is used the light conducting element is formed of a black plastic. Zettler et al. ('245) shows that it is known to provide a molded light conducting element (Fig. 3, Ref. 34, 36) that is formed of black plastic when infrared light is used (Col. 2, lines 56-58) for a moisture

Art Unit: 2877

activated wipe sensor. It would have been obvious to combine the device of Teder ('303) with the conducting element of Zettler et al. ('245) for the purpose of providing filtered light to a detector so as to prevent other wavelengths from being sensed. It would be obvious to one skilled in the art to know that the color molded plastic (Col. 2, lines 56-58) of Zettler et al. ('245) which passes infrared light would be a black color so as to block the primary colors of light.

**Claim 62**

Teder ('303) in combination with Zettler et al. ('245) disclose the claimed invention except for the light conducting element includes a plastic part formed according to a two-color injection molding process. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Teder ('303) in combination with Zettler et al. ('245) with the two-color injection molding process since it was well known in the art that lenses or filters are manufactured in a injection mold process according to the type of wavelengths to be filtered because it reduces the amount of optical element in a compact sensor system. A typical injection molded filter would be found on a regular infrared TV remote control, which are typically black.

**Claim 63**

Teder ('303) in combination with Zettler et al. ('245) discloses the claimed invention except for the light conducting element is formed by combining two single-color plastics. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Teder ('303) in combination with Zettler et al. ('245) with the two single-color plastics since it was well known in the art that combining two single-color plastics provides a low cost to manufacture and reduce the amount of space needed in a optical sensor.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

10. Claims 20-43,66 are allowed over the prior art of record

Art Unit: 2877

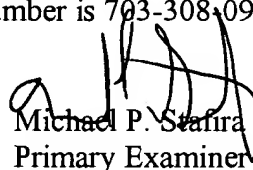
11. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Regarding claim 20, the prior art fails to disclose or make obvious a rain sensor wherein the light conducting element includes a first region having a first color and a second region having a second color that is different than the first color, and in combination with the other recited limitations of claim 20. Claims 21-43,66 are allowed by the virtue of dependency on the allowed claim 20.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael P. Stafira whose telephone number is 703-308-4837. The examiner can normally be reached on 4/10 Schedule Mon.-Thurs..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Frank Font can be reached on 703-308-4881. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0956.

  
Michael P. Stafira  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 2877